



# Comparing outcomes of a school based injury prevention intervention for low-medium risk adolescents with high-risk adolescents

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## 1. Background

- High-risk adolescents are shown to jeopardise their future social & health functioning as well as placing themselves & others at immediate risk of harm [1]
- The challenge of “reaching” high-risk adolescents, who are often marginalized, in a school environment is considerable [2]
- There is a positive relationship between age and risk taking behaviors during adolescence [3]
- This study examines outcomes (alcohol use, transport risk behaviors & violence) of a school based intervention (SPIY) by comparing low-medium risk adolescents with high-risk adolescents over a 6 month period

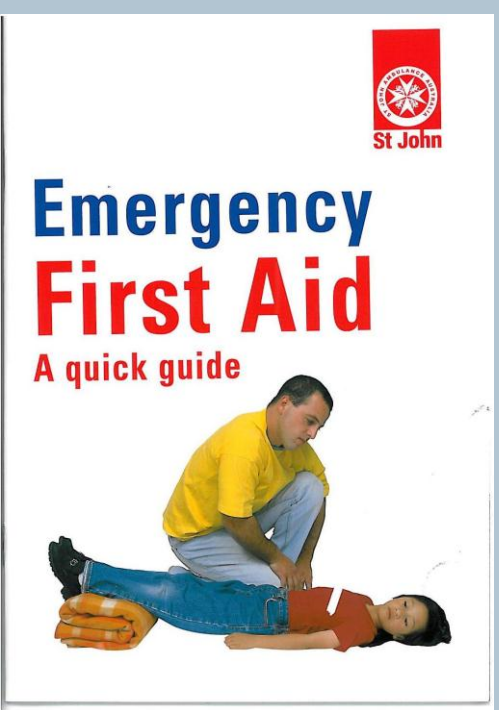
## 2. The Intervention: Skills for Preventing Injury in Youth (SPIY)

SPIY is a school based intervention program aimed at reducing risk taking behavior and injury for adolescents (13-14 years)



The intervention comprises 8 x 50 minute scenario based interactive weekly lessons that target change in:

- Alcohol use
- Transport related risks
- Interpersonal violence

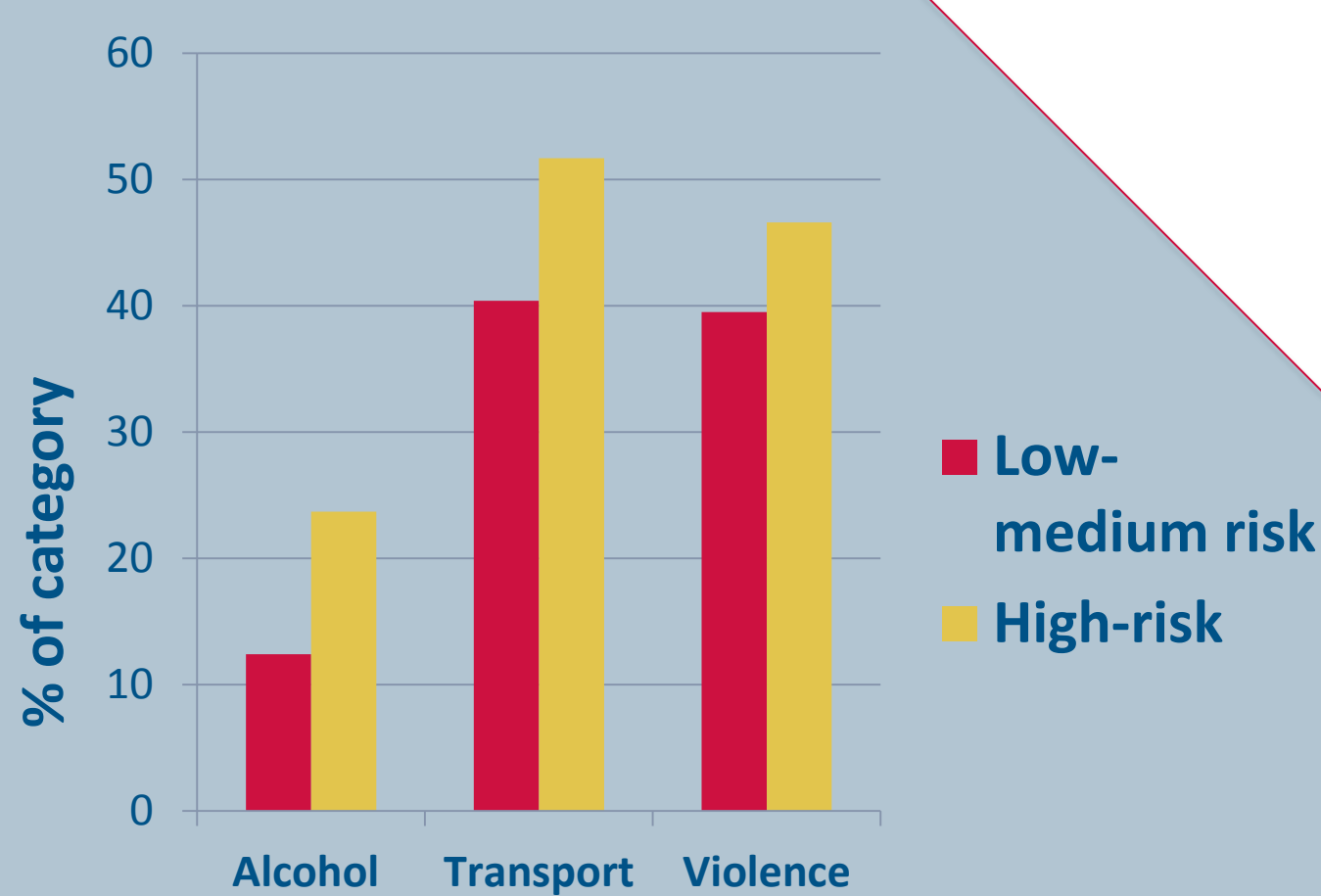


## 3. Method

- SPIY was implemented in 15 Middle Schools in Queensland, Australia
- N=1,515 (13-14 years; 55.5% female)
- Differences in intervention outcomes for low-medium risk and high-risk adolescents over a 6 month period were examined using chi square analyses
- 28.3% of adolescents were classified as high-risk pre-intervention

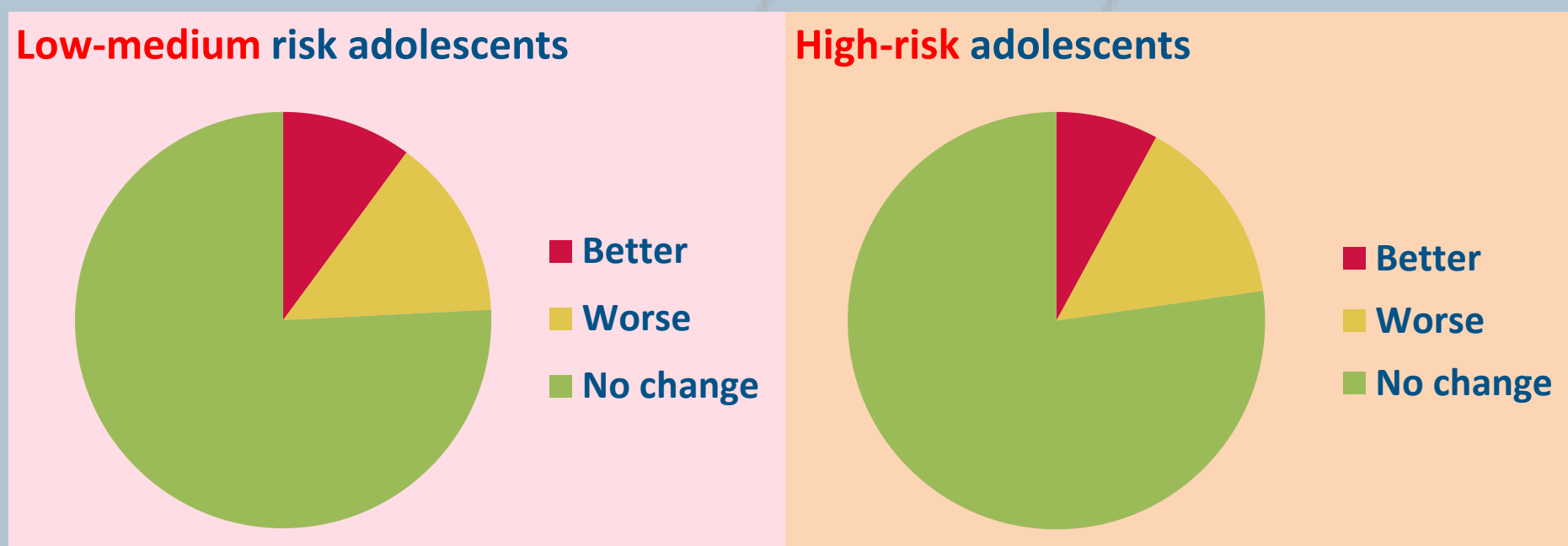
## 4. Results

- High-risk adolescents reported higher sustained engagement in negative risk behaviors over the 6 month period
- Outcome effects were the same for both groups
- Significant age trends were revealed:
  - (1) Both groups moving into problem behavior
  - (2) A comparable outcome of approximately 1/8 of both groups desisting engagement

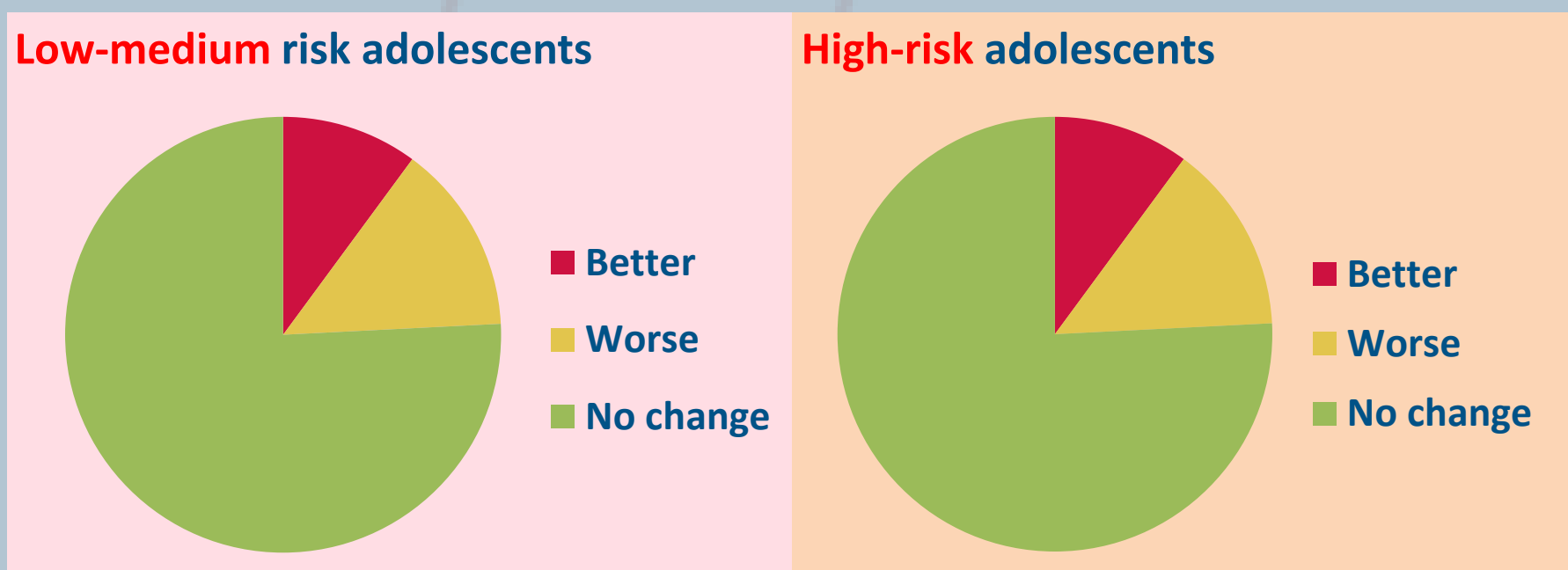


Sustained negative engagement over 6 month period (remained in “Behavior stayed bad” category)

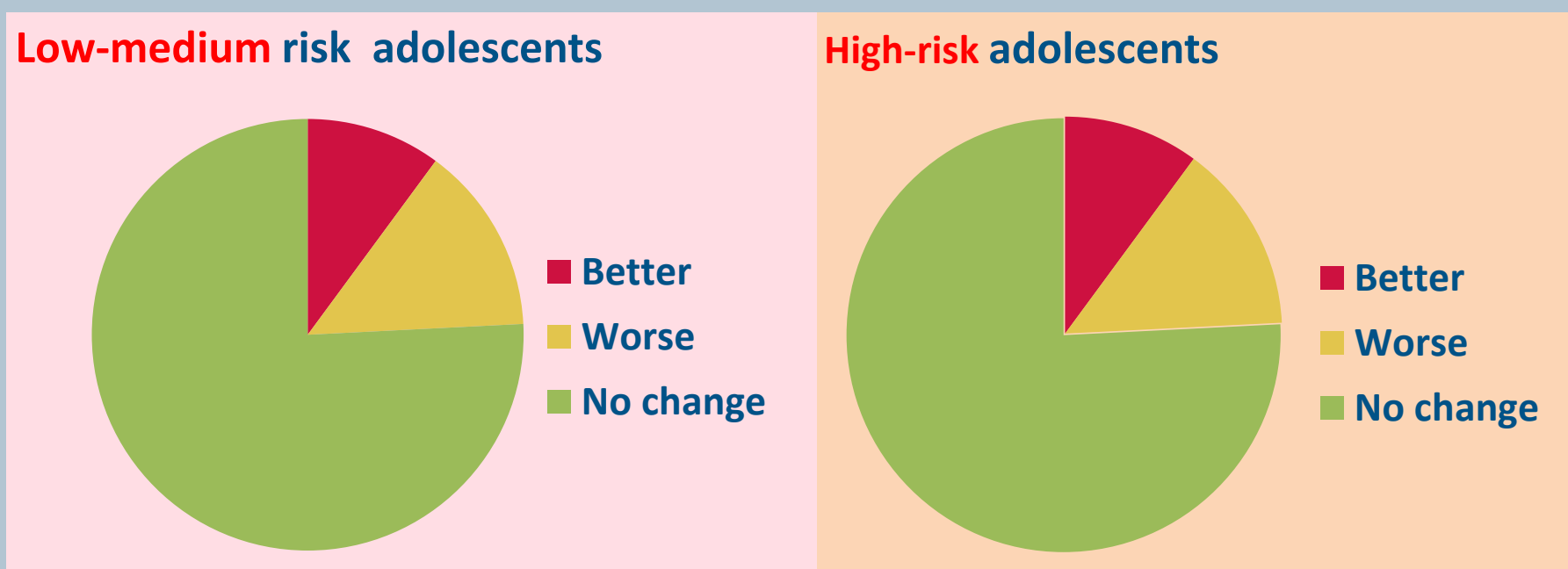
### Change in alcohol use\*



### Change in transport risks



### Change in violence



\* Significant at <0.05%

## 5. Conclusions

- The intervention was subject to the effects of age and risk exposure, with engagement in negative behaviors strengthening over time
- High-risk adolescents have stronger tendencies to continue into problem behaviors, thereby increasing their potential for over-representation of negative outcomes
- Intervention outcomes were comparable, with a meaningful proportion improving. However high-risk adolescents remain at greater risk of harm due to higher levels of engagement
- Study findings support previous research that high-risk adolescents require early intervention



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[1] World Health Organisation. (2011). *Young People: Health risks and solutions*. Fact Sheet No. 345. Geneva.  
[2] Australian Institute of Health & Welfare (2011). *Young Australians: Their health and wellbeing 2011*. Cat. No. PHE 140. Canberra.  
[3] Pickett, W., Garner, M. J., Boyce, W. F., & King, M. A. (2002). Gradients in risk for youth injury associated with multiple risk behaviours: A study of 11,329 Canadian adolescents. *Social Science & Medicine*, 55, 1055-1068.